1:Indiana U. S-4, 5(1954-5)1955 RG4 Estonia RG4

Annex "A," Subparagraph 1g,

Sociological Background

FAMILY

000 [815] Sociology was not taught at Tartu University as an independent discipline, so there were few sociological studies made in independent Estonia. Since statistics are lacking, the following will be an impressionistic, general description of the family and its role during Estonian independence with some parallels from Communist-occupied Estonia.

369 592 The extended family is not often found in modern Estonia. The single or nuclear family has been prevalent in urban communities, whereas in rural families one could oftener find cases where three generations lived together. Setumaa was a place of large joint families.

593 The duty of grown children was to care for their aged parents.

•593 The parents normally enjoyed prestige in the family and the children took their advice into consideration even after they had become adults.

[674] The percentage of juvenile delinquency was not high and occurred mostly in the larger cities, rarely in rural communities. In the rearing of children, the Estonian mother played, of course, an important role. Being at home more than the father, her moral influence was usually decisive

[733] for her growing children. Even if the father was inclined to some weakness--of which the most common was excessive drinking--the mother in many cases was able to bring up a decent

562 family. In Estonian public life the important
593 role of the mother has been strongly emphasized. Estonian literature has many examples of affectionate relations between children and their mother. Mother's Day was observed every year in schools, churches and in public

562 gatherings. On those occasions the mothers of
593
[168] large families received rewards.

593 Family reunions tended to keep alive the feel-
[527] ing of belonging between relatives. The most important family gatherings were weddings, baptisms, funerals, birthday parties, and visits during the chief holidays such as Christmas and Easter. At these gatherings several generations met and shared their joys and sorrows. In the everyday life each independent family lived its own life, but in cases of emergency, all the relatives usually helped as much as possible.

593 During the Communist regime the authori-
858 ties have often tried to force a wedge into family unity. They try to use children as spies and urge them to tell what the parents talk about at home, who is visiting in their home, and such things. Thus the parents have to distrust their

1:Indiana U. S-4, 5(1954-5)1955 RG4 Estonia RG4

593 858 own children who in their childishness may betray them, or who may become real Communists.

592 Little time is left for the old type of family life. The school-age children are busy with extra-curricular activities and the parents have compulsory duties after their day's work; indoctrination meetings, some "voluntary" duties, etc.

Nevertheless, the family is still the basic social unit in the Soviet state although it bears traits of disorganization. Deportations have made many broken homes and with the collectivization of agriculture the patriarchal Estonian farm family has become a thing of the past.

## SOURCES

113 Rajamaa, Herman. The Moulding of the Soviet Citizens. London, 1948.